

An Address by  
William Colby  
at  
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I'm delighted to be here and have a chance to talk to you all here at Santa Clara. I left CIA a few months ago but I have had some experience there (I had some experience with Congress as well) and I thought that I have a chore still to do which relates to the career that I had in intelligence. I am trying to write a book about intelligence and in the interim I thought it might be useful if I could get around and talk about intelligence to as many people in this country as I could because books are one thing but listening to people and getting a sense of what they are like and what they are saying is equally important. In that sense, I am really delighted to see such a warm and friendly audience (at least it's friendly up to now, we'll see later on) to try to clarify some things about intelligence.

I think most of us have an image of intelligence -- intelligence to our image is something to do with spying. A spy steals a secret, gives it to a General and he wins a battle. This is the tradition of intelligence -- the thing that we are brought up on. Actually it started very early. Moses sent a man from each tribe to spy out the land of Canaan. Each of those people came back and they told Moses that the land was flowing with milk and honey and I suppose that's the first economic intelligence report we ever had. Joshua -- he sent a couple of spies into Jericho and they began to add to this aura of mystery and a little bit of impropriety when they went into Jericho because they decided they would stay at the house of Rahab the harlot for the night. They stayed there and then came back over the wall and went back to Joshua and told Joshua that the people in the town there were faint-hearted. With that and a little tactical advice from the Lord, he

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decided he didn't have to attack the city -- he could march around it with the trumpets playing and give a great shout and the walls would fall down and he would take the city that way. We've had a lot of very famous spies in history which have added to this image. Ladies have contributed one, of course, Mata Hari.

We Americans have had spies in our national history since our origins in 1776. One of our most famous Americans, Nathan Hale, was recruited one day for what turned out to be probably one of the worst intelligence operations we ever ran. He was asked to go into Manhattan Island to find where the British were going to land but by the time he got there, they had already landed. He was given a very poor degree of technical assistance. He was merely told to hide his reports in his shoe where they were quickly found when he was identified by a turncoat who was working for the British. His real contribution was to leave us a ringing statement of patriotism -- his regret that he had but one life to give for his country. In more recent years we have the fictional spies who are a little bit of adventure, a little bit risque, and quite exciting -- the James Bonds and people of this nature. And in more recent times we also have our great TV spy hero -- one of the perhaps least effective spies I know -- Maxwell Smart. This was the image of intelligence at work.

When we saw last year the sensational stories in the press about assassination, dart guns, massive domestic things and trying to get Castro's beard to fall out and things of that nature, it all fitted the image. Americans said quite properly -- I guess that's what intelligence is all about. It worried a lot of Americans -- it worried some senators who said they weren't quite sure but what some rogue elephant was loose in the

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land threatening to trample our liberties and destroy our good name. Another senator, he couldn't see the elephant but he could hear it thrashing out there in the underbrush and he thought it was dangerous to our republic.

Actually, the image of an elephant for this purpose isn't a bad one, because there is another elephant story I think is applicable to this question of what intelligence is all about. That's the elephant standing there when six blind men walked up to it and no one of the six had ever seen an elephant. They didn't even know what an elephant looked like as a whole. They went up and they touched a different part of the elephant. One touched the leg, felt it up and down -- he said it's like a tree trunk, I guess the elephant is like a tree. Another grabbed hold of the tusk and he felt it long and hard and sharp and said well, it feels to me not like a tree but like a spear. Another felt the side, it was high, flat and wide and he said it seems to me kind of like a wall -- it's barring us from getting through. Another grabbed hold of the trunk and it wiggled and squirmed and he said well it's pretty obvious -- it's kind of like a snake. Well, no one of them had a concept of what the elephant really looked like.

I think no American today has an accurate concept of what intelligence really looks like. One of the reasons for that is that we kept intelligence a secret out of the old tradition. It was all secret. We weren't allowed to say anything about it and we pretended that it didn't exist. We carried that to the extent that one time when Mr. Robert Kennedy drove out to the brand new CIA building in Washington it's a big building -- had a sign pointing to it out on the road and he said, "This is the most absurd thing I ever saw. Here you have a

secret intelligence agency at the end of a four-lane highway with a sign pointing to it. Take the sign down." Well, he had a certain amount of influence at that time, so we took the sign down, but we didn't hide the fact that that was the Headquarters of CIA and every airline pilot who came down the Potomac on his way to a landing for a period of years used to point out the right side of the plane, that's where the CIA is. In more recent years he points out the left side of the plane to where Watergate is. Now they all look out there. I think that business of total secrets then kept our American people from knowing what intelligence as a whole is really like.

The other reason they don't know what intelligence is about is because intelligence has changed so much and it has changed so much in the last 20 odd years and it has changed so much largely because we Americans have changed it so much. Because the changes that America has made in intelligence have totally changed the whole concept and extent of intelligence these days.

One of those changes began in WWII when we were suddenly faced with the need to know about all sorts of lost parts of the world -- the Hump between China and India, South Pacific Islands, the North African Coast and we reached around in America to find out everything we could about them and we found there were little bits and pieces of information everywhere in America. Some of our industries and businesses had shipped things to certain places so they knew about the transportation lines. Some of our tourists had been to different places and they took pictures on the beach and in Aunt Minnie's picture in the background was a car -- indicated that that beach was strong enough to hold up an automobile -- very important if you're planning an invasion. The National Geographic Society had been going around taking pictures of tribal groups in all

parts of the world and they knew something about some of those backgrounds. Our academic institutions had studied the languages and cultures of some of those far parts of the world. We decided that the point of intelligence was to start with knowing what we already know but to centralize it, to gather it together. There was one time when we hadn't done that and we suffered a rather bad defeat -- Pearl Harbor and the aftermath. We looked and we found the Navy knew certain things the State Department didn't -- State knew certain things the Navy didn't and the Army didn't know some things they knew. As a result the people were worried about defending themselves in that area and we decided that we had to centralize ourselves.

Over these past years that process has gone on and we now reach out for all information that we can possibly get that moves in the open. We listen to the radio broadcasts and translate. We listen to the journalist reports and look at them and read them. We consult our universities who are studying some of these areas. We benefit from them. We talk to scientists who go to international scientific meetings. They tell us the level of expertise of some of the foreigners they are talking to and from that we can sometimes judge what they may be working on and we listen to what our diplomats and attaches tell us and what these data reporting services provide. This enormous flow of information that not only moves in writing but moves visually and moves electronically at 186,000 miles per second.

This centralization of intelligence has been given to some experts to look at this raw information and to seek assessments, to seek to understand what it means. We have gathered to do that job in intelligence, experts, doctors, masters, all sorts of scientists, specialized in subjects

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such as agricultural economics, nuclear physics, military affairs, political dynamics of closed societies, the linguistics, sociological trends. We have probably more masters and doctors of these subjects in CIA today than are needed to staff the faculties of most large universities in America. Because that is what has become the key element of intelligence today -- the analysis and assessment of everything that can be known.

That was one major change but there is an even more dramatic change which is the change that is coming from the application of American technology to the business of knowing what is going on in the world. From U2 days on -- we looked to see what the photograph could do to help us, to help us learn things, to help us be more precise about what we know in the far parts of the world so that we can look at and study something rather than merely count on what somebody tells us. We've applied the science of photography, the science of objects, the science of electronics, set out things that appear only in the electronics spectrum. The science of computers to rank up and arrange and help us rationalize some of this mass of information and, of course, the space age -- not only the aircraft but in space and even under the sea. We have pushed the state of the art of technology in many of these areas. The U2 was impossible when it was first flown. It flew higher and further than anybody could imagine and there have been similar impossible technological feats conducted in order that we could learn something which would otherwise be hidden from us.

As a result of this, we have increased our knowledge and we have increased the precision of our knowledge to almost unbelievable degrees in this past 15 or 20 years. In 1960, our presidential candidates had a great debate about whether there was a missile gap between us and the

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Soviet Union, whether they might have a lot of missiles that we didn't know about and we not have very many. They had, after all, just a couple years before, launched a Sputnik -- the first such effort into space -- and we suspected they might be far ahead in the space age and able to threaten our country with instant destruction. After the election we found out that gap didn't exist and since that time we've developed our intelligence techniques so that we can't have that debate. It's impossible to have a debate as to whether there are more missiles or fewer missiles. Why? Because, thanks to this technology, we look at them, we count them, we measure them. There's no question about how many they have and it's not just the government that knows those figures. Those numbers have been available to our press, to our students, and you can find them in the library as to how many Russian missiles there are. We tell the American people how many we have but they don't tell them. We learn through very sensitive machines and we then make that available to our citizens so that they know what we are facing. Now we could still debate about the meaning of the number -- whether having a larger number is compensated by having a higher technological effectiveness by the greater accuracy, whether greater precision is more important than having larger numbers. We can particularly debate whether what is apt to be the case in 1980 or 1985 unless we do something about it. That's a legitimate subject of debate but that allows us Americans to look at the problem, decide what we ought to do about the problem on the basis of solid facts and information.

I think that that change in the intelligence system which has occurred by Americans applying this technological genius that our students and our scientists and our engineers have, has revolutionized the intelligence business in that regard. There is another major change that has



been made in intelligence over this past few -- and particularly the past year or so -- although it began slightly before that. That is the process of bringing American intelligence under the law and under the constitution. To an intelligence professional, that is probably the most startling change of all because the improvement in our knowledge is one thing but changes in control of intelligence is quite a novelty because intelligence in most countries today, and intelligence certainly traditionally, served prime ministers, the king or president. Parliament didn't have anything to do with it. The public certainly didn't know anything about it. It operated without controls, it operated on the guidelines which were set.

In America, that was what we thought of intelligence until fairly recently because we had a situation some years ago in which we were expected to run intelligence operations and activities and not ask very many questions about them. We had a chairman of one of the Senate Committees stand up in the Senate and say, "If you're going to run an intelligence agency, you have got to shut your eyes and take what is coming" and he had no hope of being able to control it. Now I think that this was perhaps agreed and understood by us Americans in the early 1950s and even into the 1960s, but it didn't endure after Vietnam and Watergate because we Americans looked at our government and we said that we really didn't want our government to do things that we didn't understand, that we wanted our government to do only those things that we tell them to do and not to have a total right to do anything it wants. When we looked at intelligence we looked back through its history, we found things we didn't like. We in intelligence did this a couple years ago, before it became a matter of public knowledge. We looked back at

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intelligence, we found a few things we didn't like, we issued directives saying they wouldn't be done anymore. We said we would stop doing certain activities and we said we thought we had done the job. But we didn't really appreciate a very basic political fact about America. That it is not enough for our Government merely to do the right things, it must be understood by our people as doing the right thing. The confidence of the people and the understanding of the people is as important as what the government actually does and therefore we have gone ahead beyond that correction of intelligence itself to issuing public guidelines, public directives as to what it should do and what intelligence should not do.

President Ford issued an Executive Order a couple months ago which in great detail says exactly what CIA can do and what it can't do and that kind of a directive was never issued before because nobody every expected it and the Congress is now discussing just exactly how it will carry out its constitutional responsibility of supervising intelligence to make sure it stays within its proper limits and doesn't go out and do something it shouldn't. We have discussed whether that can be done with a single small committee which would be able to follow the activities of intelligence but still keep those secrets that need to be kept. Now I think in the process of bringing intelligence under the law also, we are developing a new middle point between total secrecy and total disclosure. Total secrecy has created doubts in our population about intelligence. Total disclosure will mean that we can't conduct intelligence. Therefore, we've had to seek out some middle ground by which we do recognize the importance of the secrets of intelligence just as we recognize the importance of our public's knowing in general what that intelligence elephant, if you will, is really all about and what it looks like.

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Now these then are the changes that America has made in intelligence -- the analytical process, the technological effort and bringing it under the law. Am I saying that there are no more spies and that all that activity is over? No, I'm not. Because there are countries that can keep secrets that could endanger our country. There are countries which conduct their primaries behind the closed door of a politbureau meeting in secret. There are countries that have research laboratories, working on new forms of energy, new forms of power, that could threaten our country. There are countries which in secret decide they will impose some boycott on us and surprise us and upset our economy. We have to know about those things because if we don't know about those things, we can't do much about them.

Some people say this is not the real world though, that really the world has changed, that we have a new world, that nuclear weapons are so destructive, nobody could possibly use them. That really, all the older people are hung up on those old concepts of the Cold War of the 1950s and that really there isn't any monolithic communism anymore. Then what are we so concerned about? There has been a split between the Soviet Union and China. There are stirrings of independence and autonomy on the part of Soviet satellites like Rumania, Yugoslavia. Even some of the communist parties around the world are talking about being more nationalist than communist. So really do we need this kind of activity? Well, I think that's a legitimate question. But I think we ought to apply that old statement of a philosopher named Santayana who said, "He who refuses to learn from history is doomed to repeat it."

Now we tried, believing that the world was safe for democracy. In 1920, we looked back on a war (World War I) which was perhaps not necessary. We had blundered and been propagandized into it.

It had been bloodily and badly fought. We had decided that it was heavily influenced by the old dynastic squabbles of Europe and by the merchants of death, the arms manufacturers, and that really we faced a new world and that really we didn't want to involve ourselves with those far away problems. We said we weren't going to join a league of all those powers to try to run the world in that light. We decided that we would reduce our army to something smaller than that of Rumania and we decided that we would take a brand new battleship that we just finished building. We took it out and we sank it to demonstrate that we were really very sincere about naval disarmament. Our Secretary of State closed up a code breaking unit in the Department of State because he said that gentlemen don't read each other's mail. When some problems arose around the world in far away places -- when the Japanese began to attack the Chinese way off in Asia, in Manchuria, we said it was too far away for us to worry about. When Mussolini began to attack some local inhabitants way off in Abyssinia and Ethiopia, we decided it was much too far away for us to have much to do with it. When those big powers began to contest in Spain, the Nazis and the Fascists, against the Soviet communists in Spain, we decided we would show a moral example and we passed a law called the Neutrality Act that we were going to demonstrate the proper way of staying out and ignoring that kind of dispute in hopes that it would go away. Did it work? No, it didn't. Out of that abdication of interest and concern for the greater world that we live in, we drew the greatest war in history.

As we look around to the 1960s, do we see that it is safe for democracy? That really there is no need for these concerns about our protection? As we look at the Great Powers -- the Chinese, the Soviets -- we see that they have grown in their military power and in their political power.

Union which is now ranging not only in the Mediterranean but is appearing in the Indian Ocean, the South Atlantic and the Caribbean. We see that they have a real problem in their succession as the 80-odd year old Mao, the 70-odd year old Politburo of the Soviet Union, are facing the problem of giving power to a new generation and we are trying to figure out whether that will go to a group of cautious bureaucrats with whom we could live or to a group of radical ideologues who admit they have a holy mission to overcome the world, or to some aggressive and authoritarian military leaders who would reestablish the alliance between China and the Soviet Union with the idea of dominating the world as a whole. No, that succession problem is not clear at this point and we have to look forward to the danger that one of those solutions might bring to us.

As we look at the developed countries of Europe and Japan, we see there are economic weaknesses and we recall the last time they got into serious economic problems and the European countries and Japan reached for extreme solutions to the problems they faced -- authoritarian, totalitarian solutions to their economic difficulties. The Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere was Japan's solution to its problem.

This then leads us to consider the less developed world where I think perhaps the most serious problems today are because the less developed world sees the gap between it and the affluent, developed world growing not reducing. They see the pressures of population increasing and the production of food and the growth and development of their economy not growing. We see that these increases in frustration have an ending in bitterness and we see this develop and show itself in terms of boycotts, in terms of terrorism and it is not too far fetched to look downstream and think of some reckless authoritarian despot who decides he could redress the balance between his and the

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own home-made backyard nuclear weapon.

Now, I think the world is not yet safe for democracy and of the 140-odd countries in the United Nations, only about 20 or 30 can be classed as democracies. And only in the last year or so we have seen turn toward authoritarian solution, two countries who were the pride of the tutelage of Britain and America -- India and the Philippines. We are not in a world safe for democracy. We must know the problems and the threats that our country faces. We must know them, of course, to defend ourselves if that's what we have to do. But I think there is a more hopeful look. That if we do know the problems, and the threats, and we do know the problems those countries have, then we not only can defend ourselves in extremis but we can also develop the counter to these threats so that we can demonstrate that they cannot be successful and then they would not be used so that we could deter their use. We can also by accurate information know precisely what a real threat is and not be led to overreact to a phantom threat and waste our money in preparing for something that won't happen.

I think the most heartening thing is that if we know the facts and the problems, we can negotiate, reach over to those countries and discuss the reality of the problems they face and hopefully together solve those problems. Now we've tried that before and we were unable to do it because our intelligence wasn't good enough. In 1946, the U.S. wanted to internationalize atomic energy and give it to the United Nations and let it run it. But it wasn't able to get the necessary guarantees from the other countries. In the 1950s, President Eisenhower had a concept of "open skies" whereby Soviet aircraft could fly over America and American aircraft could fly over the Soviet Union to

in those countries. But that wasn't acceptable to the Soviet Union. And in the 1960s we came up with the idea of inspection teams wandering through the back country of the Soviet Union and of America to see that there was no secret activity conducted there that could threaten the other countries. but that ran smack across the Soviet desire to run their country under authoritarian control and secret way. They couldn't afford to have inspection teams wander through. It wasn't until our technology had increased well enough so that we could determine what was going on in the back country by our own means that we were able to go to our President and our Congress and our people and say we could make an agreement on the limitation of strategic weapons because we could make the agreement and our intelligence was good enough that we could guarantee that we would know whether the Soviets were abiding by it or whether they were trying to cheat us. On the basis of that assurance, we went ahead and made the SALT agreements of 1972 and one of the elements of those agreements, of course, was an agreement to limit, very sharply, anti-ballistic missile systems which has been conservatively estimated would otherwise require an investment by the American taxpayer of something in the nature of \$50 to \$100 billion.

Now there is a further step in the use of intelligence with this kind of peaceful solution to problems. We all remember, in our study of histories, how many wars started between Great Powers based on a conflict between Small Powers. The Small Power starts to fight and the Big Powers get drawn into it. We have been in some situations recently in which our intelligence has been good enough that we have seen the fact of hostility, suspicion, misunderstanding grow between the Small Powers and we have been able to go to both of them with solid information as

remove those suspicions and get them to talk to each other and in that sense we have positively brought about a peaceful solution to something that otherwise might have resulted in military conflict.

Now I've talked about this use of intelligence, of knowledge, but there is another activity and it is the one most of you hear about and you wonder why I haven't talked about Chile, assassinations, secret wars, overthrowing governments, political support. Why haven't I talked about that? Because isn't that an important aspect of what I have to talk about? Well it was an important aspect. During the 1950s, we spent something on the order of 40% of CIA's budget on this kind of activity. When we faced in Western Europe a military threat, we met it with the NATO alliance. When we faced economic crisis in Western Europe we met it with the Marshall Plan. When we faced a very energetic political penetration or subversion by the communist parties, communist trade unions, communist youth groups, communist cultural groups, we met it by some help to some socialist and democratic forces in Western Europe to match the kind of assistance and support that the Soviets were giving the Communist elements of that country. And in that conflict we won. Western Europe's military security today depends on NATO. Its economic success depends on the Marshall Plan. Its free institutions depend upon the success of that assistance by America to some of these groups struggling to meet the challenge placed by that political penetration. But in recent years, that effort has declined because we haven't had the need for so much. As the Soviet Bloc did separate into pieces, as the immediate threat did decline, so this kind of activity by CIA also declined and for the last several years we have been spending something on the order of 5% of our budget on this kind of political or para-military activity. So that it is a relatively small part of our efforts today. I still think

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it's an important part of our potential activity as we face the world of the Eighties and the world of the Nineties because I believe it may become an easier, and more effective solution to the rise of somebody who would be a real threat to the world and a real threat to America, if we were able to help some friends of America in that country to sustain themselves against someone who would otherwise turn that country into a hostile force. It would be easier to solve that in a political argument inside that country than it would be to face military confrontation with that country under hostile management.

I think this is the process that we are talking about. It is help to friends of America in an internal struggle when they are not able to sustain themselves, by themselves, and need some outside help. CIA doesn't manipulate and manage these, it has to find somebody who wants to do so but doesn't have the capability of doing it himself. It is through the assistance that we are able to give, secret assistance where it is necessary that it be secret, otherwise it could not be given, that we can eliminate more serious confrontations in later years. I wish that we had been able to help the Christian Democratic Party in Germany in 1933 to win the election which Hitler won at that time and we may have not been faced with his management of Germany in the years that followed.

I think this then is the truth of intelligence today. If we look at the specifics of the reports made on intelligence through our Constitutional process, I think we can bring down the level of sensationalism that they were originally phrased in, if we look at the fact of what the Senate found after five months of investigation. We find that CIA never assassinated anybody. We find it did try to assassinate Mr. Castro and failed. It started a procedure against Mr. Lumumba but cut it off at a fairly early state and outside of that it didn't assassinate anybody.

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I think that is an important part of an accurate perception of what intelligence is about today. Yes, there were some things that we Americans don't want and didn't want our country and our Government to do, but I don't think we are in a situation where it has done a great deal of that. I think we have found some situations where CIA did go over the edge and do things that as we look back on it, should not have been done. We have corrected that. We have outlined clear guidelines. We can arrange a firm system of supervision so that this will not happen and so we can benefit by intelligence and not be frightened.

So I don't think there's a rogue elephant loose. I think that we Americans have changed intelligence to a degree that is really not known in the world and even in America, but I think this change in intelligence is going to produce a new intelligence that will enable us Americans not only to be assured of what our intelligence services do but will also give us the benefits of the better information and the better knowledge of the world that good intelligence can provide. In that way I think we will not be either defenseless or lawless in the work of our intelligence services. Indeed, maybe we will develop a new meaning for the initials CIA, in addition to its meaning Central Intelligence Agency, that CIA will come to mean Constitutional Intelligence for Americans. Thank you very much.

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Questions and Answers

1. Q & A I'm afraid I can't give you an idea of the money. The Senate and the House have both voted that the CIA budget remain secret. The last vote on that was six months ago. The Senate Committee has recommended that a figure be published. Both I, and Mr. Bush, have urged that the figure not be published. We are concerned that if we publish the figure we will have to explain what it covers and what it doesn't cover, explain why it went up, why it went down and you will very rapidly begin to disclose the details of our intelligence activities. In 1947, the AEC issued a one line figure for the activities of our nuclear weapons. They said that was all they would say, just that one line and by 1974, 20 odd years later, that one line had grown into 15 pages of detailed explanation and I think that if another country is interested in keeping secrets from us, could learn a great deal from looking at the figures of our intelligence budget. When they saw a bulge, some new thing was obviously in process. They would immediately go around and look for it. If they saw a decline, they would immediately say they were free for some activity because something had been cut off. In that sense we should not give our targets, if you will, our enemies, the benefit of that kind of advice as to how much we know about their secrets.
2. Q: The Government of Italy has fallen again and this time there's fear the Communists will gain control. Are there any plans by the CIA to prevent the fall?

A: At the moment, I'm not privy to the CIA's secret. I did say

shortly before I left office, in response to the appearance of some press statements about CIA plans to give some help to Italy, that CIA had not given any help to the political parties of Italy in recent years.

3. Q: How will it affect Italy if the Communists gain control?

A: I think it would be a very serious problem. The Italian communist party is a very special communist party. From the time of G-----? through Togliatti to Luigi Longo and now to Balaguer, the Italian communist party has tried to be both Italian and communist. In bad days, bad cold war days, bad economic days, they are a little more communist than they are Italian. In good days of economic progress, detente days, they are inclined to be more Italian than communist. Right now they are trying to be more Italian than communist but I'm somewhat concerned that if you had a deterioration of the economy or of our relations with the Soviet Union, they would turn back to being more communist than Italian and we would have a serious problem as to the degree we could engage in joint military planning for the defense of Western Europe with a government which was made up of communists.

4. Q: I read in US News & World Report that CIA conducted domestic spying on the campus radicals especially on campuses such as Berkeley, kept files on individuals. How do you justify that activity?

A: I don't. I can explain it but I don't justify it. What happened was that when the anti-war movement got going, two things happened. First, the President of the US turned to CIA

aiding it, stimulating it, supporting it? CIA went to find out whether any foreigners were doing this. In the process of finding out, they collected a lot of information about the anti-war movement so they would know what they were studying. They collected more paper than they should have. Most of that paper was from the FBI or from public press statements. They did build up files much beyond what they should have.

5. Q: Did this activity take place while you were DCI?

A: No. They also put some people into the anti-war movement with the idea of going abroad and seeing what the foreign countries would say and do with them. That's all right, but while they were here in the US preparing to go abroad, three of them reported on the activities of Americans which was none of their business and they should not have done it. The second whole area of activity was, the Office of Security of CIA was concerned there would be a threat to intelligence sources and methods of CIA and they gathered a large amount of information about the anti-war movement. Both of these were cut off in 1973, cut off in good part at my direction, but I think the fact was that we still had the material and I had told them to start getting rid of this stuff when the exposure of our activity came about, we were asked not to destroy anything until the investigations were over. But I said at the time and I still maintain that that is an invitation I would dearly like to receive, is to attend a big bonfire when these investigations are over at which we get rid of all that stuff that is not CIA business. I would comment

that in response to the Presidents' curiosity, CIA told both President Johnson and Nixon that there was essentially no foreign support for the American anti-war movement.

5. Q: How do you justify the attitude of saying we know what's best for other governments, like Angola, or we can establish governments in other countries that favor US policies (sic), etc.

A: I don't justify. I say that the United States in the way that the sovereign state system is set up in the world today, that any country has a right to conduct a reasonable amount of effort in its self-defense. It must be for self-defense -- it's not to tell what government is best for them -- it's for the defense of the United States. That's the only justification. It is not justifiable to go in and impose our form of government on another group of people just because we believe in it. It is justifiable to think of our own defense and our own protection but we must use reasonable means. Reasonable means in some situations can include military force but my point is that in some situations, some private help to some friends of America can eliminate a more serious confrontation later by solving the problem at a low level of political debate rather than a high level of military violence. It is a more reasonable means than facing military conflict.

7. Q: Doesn't that enable the CIA to undertake any kind of activity it wants?

A: If it really isn't in our self-defense, not just the argument, then you're right, it is not justified. If it is really related

to our self-defense then it is justifiable. It is not justifiable to go out and impose our form of government all around the world. The question is how do you decide? Who decides? A war you decide by congressional declaration. Congress has also voted a war powers act which says the President can use military forces of the US provided he tells Congress and they have 60 days in which to call it off. I think that the arrangements for these kinds of political and paramilitary actions do require the President to decide that it is important to the national security and they require that six committees of the Congress be informed and six committees of the Congress were informed about Angola and they didn't have any great problem with that. I do not justify any activity. I do not justify assassination and I'm the one who issued the directives against it. I reject it totally.

8. Q: What sort of assistance did the CIA give in times of the elections in Chile when subsequently Allende was elected?

A: The Senate Committee report goes into great detail but leaves out one aspect. It says that CIA did assist the democratic elements in Chile over a long period to help them to win elections and to sustain themselves against Allende. CIA at one period in 1970, for period of six weeks, at direct order of the President, went out and tried to organize a military action, to prevent Allende from being inaugurated after he was elected with a plurality. That effort failed. Thereafter, CIA did not try to bring about a military revolt. In 1973, there was no direct connection of the CIA with the military and in fact

forward to the election in 1976. The thing that happened was the President Allende had so upset the social structure and economy of Chile that the most constitutional army in Latin America moved against him and overthrew him and in the process he apparently was a suicide.

9. Q: Re the nationalization of US companies -

A: The CIA acted under direct orders of the President in all of its activities. Basic reason for our actions against Allende and for the other forces in Chile was that Allende when he was candidate and president, made no secret of his belief that he wanted to establish a link with Castro and with him spread the revolution to the rest of Latin America. Now the effect of that would have been to develop the whole of Latin America hostile to the US. That was a matter of concern to Americans. The particular interest of the corporations was a very incidental matter. It was related, I won't say it had nothing to do with it, but it was not the dominant feature.

A: The US, when it has had an option, has supported socialist and democratic forces. When it hasn't had that option, it has supported authoritarian forces, all the way from the far left to the far right. The US has supported the greatest authoritarian force in history -- Stalin's Russia against a greater threat from Hitler's Germany. They also supported Tito. It has supported right wing dictatorships when there was no better alternative. It didn't support Allende because he made no secret of the fact that he wanted to conduct a policy hostile to the US.



DCI PRESS CONFERENCE

26 January 1976

OPENING - Mr. Colby

Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen. Thank you for coming. I invited you to express my concern over two things. First, the obvious bursting of the dam protecting many of our secret operations and activities through the exposure of the draft of the report of the House Select Committee on Intelligence. We provided large amounts of information to this Committee with the understanding that the secrets therein would be protected and that if a difference between us arose as to whether they should be disclosed the President would be consulted and his decision would be final in the absence of further judicial determination. The Committee complied with this arrangement as recently as two weeks ago, but now apparently asserts by some unknown logic that continued compliance is not required with respect to the final report. The Committee seems neither able to keep secrets nor its agreements.

Second, from the draft of the Committee report that I've seen and the news stories today about it, I believe it totally biased and a disservice to our nation, giving a thoroughly wrong impression of American intelligence. By selected use of the evidence provided, innuendo, and suggestive language, the Committee implies that intelligence has deceptive budgets, has no accountability, and has not complied with one direct order of the President.

I deny these flatly. As to performance, I reiterate that America has the best intelligence in the world and that the Committee's selective application and quotation of our own efforts to improve ourselves are an outrageous calumny against the dedicated collectors, the imaginative engineers and scientists, and the thoughtful analysts who comprise American intelligence.

In short, this report should not be issued and should not have been leaked, and I agree with the Chairman of the Committee on two things: one, that the best way to stop this leakage and the dangers to the United States that it involves is by a rapid dissolution of the Committee; and, second, with the Committee's recommendation that stiff sanctions be imposed against Government employees, including members of Congress, for leaking secret information. Further, I reiterate that the solution to this year of investigations and sensation lies in the better guidelines that we have adopted in intelligence and recommended elsewhere, in the better supervision that responsible, Constitutional oversight could provide, and the better secrecy that is essential to the protection of intelligence and of our nation in the world in which we are living in the years ahead. Thank you very much and I'd be glad to answer your questions.

Q. Mr. Colby, you suggest that it was Congress that leaked this thing to the New York Times, yet members of the Committee indicate that they believe it was more likely the Executive Branch that did.

A. I don't know who did -- I have no idea, I know that I didn't.

Q. Mr. Colby, have you asked for an investigation to see how it was leaked -- by some other Agency?

A. No I have not. It has obviously just come to our attention right away, and I'm not going to go outside the confines of this Agency to investigate the leaks.

Q. Could you tell us what you know about Senator Jackson and his help to the Agency on how to handle material given to Congress.

A. I think that what Senator Jackson did was perfectly appropriate. He was a member of our oversight committee -- the Chairman of the oversight committee had been shot and was in the hospital -- when another committee of the Congress asked to get into some of our operational activities. The tradition of the Congress

had been that those operational activities would only be discussed with our oversight committees. The Agency asked Senator Jackson just how he thought this should be handled and he suggested that in the absence of the Chairman of the Armed Services Oversight Committee that we go to the Chairman of the Appropriations Oversight Committee, and that's the extent of it.

Q. Mr. Colby, the Senate Committee released a report that you asked them not to release in the form it was released in. Has there been damage from the release of that report in your mind or do you only condemn the House Committee?

A. I believe there has been substantial damage to our country from the release of that long assassination report. I think that the details of that will be mined for years to come by groups hostile to this country. As you know, I had a discussion with that committee just before the report was leaked urging that the last names be excluded from it. They were not. Nothing has happened to those individuals yet, but I am concerned at the inclusion of either names or data that can easily be used to deduce names, and those are present in the draft of this committee's report that I have seen. The committee did comply with our request to take out a number of names, but there are still clear identities there of people who could be hurt, who dealt with us on a confidential basis in various countries in the world.

Q. Has the CIA's ability to help the two sides we most support in Angola been damaged by what was done by Congress?

A. Well, I think that the fact that Congress has withheld any further assistance to Angola through the Senate vote and which is coming up for the House vote tomorrow obviously is designed to limit the degree of assistance America can provide to some people who are fighting the representatives and clients of the Soviet Union.

Q. It was designed to do that, but did it have that effect?

A. It has certainly had the effect of barring any additional aid if the law is applied.

- Q. Sir, do you feel that the Congress should not have a voice in that?
- A. I think the Congress has every right to a voice, but any of this activity other than intelligence gathering is under the law required to be reported to six committees of Congress. I so did many months ago. And while individuals indicated some dissent from this, the Congress as a whole or the committees as a whole, through no formal way and no formal vote or any other way indicated that they were so opposed to it that it should be stopped, until it was leaked and became the subject of a great deal of sensation here a month or so ago.
- Q. Mr. Colby, how can members of Congress who are not members of one of these six committees express their view on operations they know nothing about?
- A. There are lots of ways that a member of Congress can express his views. He can express a general policy about an area of the world or about a particular kind of operation and can see whether the fellow members of the Congress join him. Two years ago the Congress turned down by a three-to-one vote a suggestion that CIA should conduct no operation other than intelligence gathering abroad, i.e., no political or para-military operations. Therefore, the Congress indicated that they should be continued, and we have continued them. There are ways in which individual Congressmen can approach the Chairman of the oversight committees about certain situations, and that has been done in the past. There are obviously ways in which the members of the oversight committee can express their views, either individually or by securing a committee vote, by appealing to the leadership, by visiting the President -- there are lots of ways in which a member of Congress can express himself.
- Q. Mr. Pike -- I mean, I'm sorry, Mr. Colby; Mr. Pike has said in the past -- not today -- that if the Administration is not leaking these secrets, the Administration is certainly pouncing on the leaks in an effort to cut off Congress' access to information in the future by saying that it can't be trusted. Is it possible that you're protesting too much so you are trying to take advantage of this to cut off Congress in the future?

- A. Absolutely not. I have urged and recommended stronger Congressional oversight. I am prepared to live with that, and I'm sure my successor will. The problem is whether that oversight can be responsible and protect the secrets involved, and I don't think there's any inconsistency between a strong oversight by a representative committee of the Congress and providing the members of that committee full information about what we're doing.
- Q. Mr. Colby, you said that the Agency's budget has been forthright or has not been deceptive, and yet in the case of Angola, the value of 45 caliber automatics that were perfectly serviceable and would cost the average person \$40 or \$50 was listed as \$5. Is that not dishonest and deceptive?
- A. I think --- I'm glad you mentioned that because that's an example of taking one little fact and trying to create a general climate of distrust. That particular instance comes from the fact that CIA applies the dollar value of any equipment that it passes away as the dollar value that it receives for the item from the Department of Defense. According to the Foreign Assistance Act, if there are certain things which are surplus they are valued at 1/3 their value. This we did with a very small quantity of some of our para-military effects. The change on the total sum involved would have amounted to about one or two million dollars, and the idea that the whole sum involved would have been doubled is nonsense.
- Q. Mr. Colby, under the sources and methods provision of the charter, have you or has it been proposed that you investigate the sources of these leaks or that any other agency investigate the sources of these leaks?
- A. Not yet. We have been trying to deal with the leaks as they go along. We are clearly in the situation of trying to protect ourselves to the extent we can through indoctrination, through our own secrecy agreements, and through recommendations for improvement in the laws. But any investigation of a possible violation of law would be done by the proper law enforcement agencies -- not by CIA. Any investigation by CIA would be of our

own employees to see whether there is a leak here -- some impropriety in their behaviors.

- Q. Mr. Colby, you don't think this would be appropriate under the sources and methods provision of the charter?
- A. No I do not. I've referred to that as a gray area in the past which was the subject of some misunderstanding, and I think it is very clear that my authority is limited to the administrative control of this Agency.
- Q. Mr. Colby, what communication have you had with the President about the latest developments -- the latest leaks -- or with staff members at the White House?
- A. We've discussed at various times various problems on this whole subject of how we're doing our business. We're in constant communication with the White House, naturally.
- Q. Has the White House explained the exact course that it's going to take to try to stop House intelligence. . .
- A. No, we've discussed this and we are discussing recommendations for an improvement of our secrecy legislation.
- Q. Mr. Colby, the House Intelligence Committee recommends that the Defense Intelligence Agency be disbanded and the NSA be taken away from the Department of Defense. Do you agree with those recommendations?
- A. I haven't seen those recommendations and without really knowing more of the detail I think it better that I not comment too rapidly on them. I think I have worked well with the Defense Intelligence Agency; I think they do a useful service in the Department of Defense. I don't know the specifics of the recommendation. I'd have to look at them to find out.
- Q. How will this "bursting of the dam" as you call it affect your appearance and your performance in front of this Committee? You want this Committee dissolved? Are you going to continue to cooperate with them at all?

- A. Well, I think that this Committee is in the course of its final days, and I don't think there's much need for any further provision of secret information to them. We are discussing the content of their final resolution on the report. We have taken the position that this report should not be issued in its present form. We also worked with them to secure the elimination of the most dangerous aspects, but we still take the position that large portions of this report will hurt our foreign policy and will very substantially injure our ability to conduct covert operations and intelligence gathering in the future.
- Q. Mr. Colby, can you be more specific on just what kind of damage to national security is done by the report?
- A. I think the best way is to point to various foreigners who have indicated that they just plain don't dare to work with us anymore because we are giving an impression that our country is totally unable to keep a secret in the intelligence business.
- Q. Have they done that in recent days?
- A. They have done it in the past month or so -- a number of them have indicated this.
- Q. Have they done it since the leaks about the Pike ---?
- A. Well, they hadn't done it since yesterday afternoon that I know of, but I would have to find out what papers this morning said.
- Q. How about since last Monday?
- A. Well, I can't name any particular one, but I had a report a couple of days ago which summed up, over the past month or so, the impression abroad, and it came to the very clear conclusion that there has been a marked erosion of confidence in the last month. But up to that time we had been giving the impression that we were going through this investigation but that we were going to protect some of the most critical aspects of our intelligence

business. The last month has very substantially eroded that confidence among our foreign friends.

Q. Mr. Colby, is any purpose served in keeping secrets from Americans -- information that is well known to hostile foreign intelligence services?

A. I think what we're talking about here is the degree to which you spread information which can be used by terrorists, by paranoids, by others. The fact that the KGB knows something does not necessarily mean that some wild man in some strange country knows it, and he is the one that we are concerned about just as well as the KGB.

Q. [Totally unintelligible.]

A. Well, I have recommended --- Last Friday we discussed with the Senate Government Operations Committee the formation of an oversight committee which would have full authority to oversee and get into the details of our business, but it would be limited in number, it would have strict controls over the discipline of its staff, and that the members would take full responsibility for maintaining the secrets that were given to them. I also believe that we need legislation to improve our ability to exert discipline over the members of the Executive Branch who will receive access to intelligence and over retirees after they leave the intelligence business -- including me.

Q. Mr. Colby, will your association with the Government, the Administration, end with Mr. Bush's swearing in or do you plan to stay and continue to work with the President on recommendations he prepares for Congress?

A. No, I think when Mr. Bush takes over, then I will become a private citizen. My link with intelligence will consist of two things -- my secrecy agreement and, I hope, my pension.

(I thought you're going to write a book too.)



Q. On the matter of the aid to Turkish rebels in Iraq, that is something I understand from the stories, the President decided on against the CIA's wishes and was stopped again without consulting or getting approval of the CIA. Now, isn't that something Congress should be talking about, discussing ways of bringing intelligence business, covert operations, under greater control of not only the President but of CIA?

A. Well, without confirming any particular covert action, which is what I'm concerned about in these reports, the fact is that CIA is a part of the Executive Branch and the fact that a general doesn't agree with the order that's given to him doesn't relieve him of the obligation to carry it out. And the fact that an Ambassador doesn't agree with a policy that he's asked to inform a foreign office about doesn't relieve him of the obligation of going ahead and informing them. There are limits of course that are set out in the law and our basic American morality, but when CIA is directed by the President to do something which is quite proper within its charter, then I think CIA has the job of carrying it out, and I might say that I think CIA does a very good job of just that.

Q. Mr. Colby, you were reported to have met with President Ford on Sunday -- first, was that the case and, second, would you tell us some idea of what did you ask him?

A. That's not the case.

Q. That's not the case?

A. No.

Q. Mr. Colby, if left to you, what would you do about the Congressmen who leak intelligence secrets?

A. Well, I don't think it ought to be left to me. I think it ought to be left to his colleagues in the Congress. The Constitution says that the Houses are the judges of their members, and I believe the responsible majority of the House and the responsible majority of the Senate will structure themselves to exert the necessary

discipline over their members in order to keep the secrets and continue a responsible oversight of intelligence.

- Q. Mr. Colby, you said in the past that various American companies, especially some working overseas, have often cooperated with the CIA out of patriotic duty the officers of the corporation felt. Does that include any news organizations and any individual journalists, and does it continue today?
- A. What I'd like to say about that is what I've said many times before, that we have structured ourselves so that we do not have any operational relationship with the staff members of any general circulation American media. I think that the odd stringer, the free lancer, that is another question, that the editor and managers of the news services deal with them as independent contractors, they sell their copy and their activity to whomever will buy it, and I think that we can be one of those people who also benefit from their activity without in any way injuring their relationship with the American press. We do have specific directives that no action will be taken by CIA in any way to manage what they report to an American journal.
- Q. Do you believe, Mr. Colby, that a free lancer who is dealing with CIA on an operational basis should let his peers(?) in the media know that he has a relationship with CIA?
- A. I don't see that it's necessary at all. He's a free agent, and he deals with various journals, various other customers. And the fact is that I don't think he's obligated to report to anybody exactly who he deals with.
- Q. Did the Agency influence the Reuters' News Report?
- A. The Agency has no manipulation or exploitation of Reuters. That was another example of taking a side reference and making a major statement of it. I think the Committee referred to some manipulation of Reuters. This was a purely hypothetical example put up when we

were discussing the difference between American news media and foreign news media, and someone else used the example Reuters, the conversation went around on the subject of Reuters. We have no manipulation and no management of Reuters News.

Q. Mr. Colby, a little earlier you spoke of basic American morality. Tell me where in that morality does it say for the CIA to act apparently as an intermediary to procure female companionship to foreign heads of state?

A. I'm talking about today and for the future. I'm not going to go into the misdeeds or missteps of 28 years. I think the fact is we have made some mistakes. I've admitted that many times, but to use those to characterize the Agency I think is totally wrong.

Q. Is Hairy Days the only such movie the Agency ever made?

A. We've made various movies -- what movies we made I can't tell you right now.

Q. Has the Agency ever made pornographic movies except Hairy Days, of course?

A. I don't know of any others.

MR. COLBY: Well, thank you very much.